



# Acquisition and Assistance Review and Approval Document (AARAD) for Pre-Solicitation and Pre-Award

A Mandatory Reference for ADS Chapter 300

New Edition Date: 07/09/2013  
Responsible Office: M  
File Name: 300man\_070913

# **ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE REVIEW AND APPROVAL DOCUMENT**

## **Pre-Solicitation and Pre-Award**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Acquisition and Assistance Review and Approval Document (AARAD) must be used to review planned acquisition and assistance awards at or above \$25 million in total estimated cost. It documents the responsible Assistant Administrator's (AA) approval for the Contracting Officer/Agreement Officer (CO/AO) to move forward with a solicitation and the Administrator's authorization to proceed with awards ("go/no-go") at or above \$75 million in total estimated cost.

The AARAD process applies to acquisition and assistance solicitations and awards signed by an M/OAA backstop CO/AO, including contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, indefinite delivery-indefinite quantity (IDIQ) contracts and task orders issued under IDIQs, awards to public international organizations (PIOs) and interagency agreements. Food for Peace non-emergency awards are included in the review process. Humanitarian assistance and transition initiatives awards are exempted. Bureaus will consider the criteria when planning awards signed within the bureau or mission by AAs or mission directors (e.g., government-to-government agreements (G2G), awards to PIOs and bilateral development partners and Interagency Agreements), but these awards will not be included in this review process at this time.

At the pre-solicitation stage, the responsible AAs must validate that all new planned solicitations for awards at or above \$25 million in total estimated cost fulfill the qualifying criteria in the AARAD. Regional bureau AAs will serve as the approving officials for award solicitations initiated in their respective bureaus in USAID/Washington or overseas missions falling under their oversight. Pillar bureau AAs will approve USAID/Washington award solicitations that the bureaus initiate. As a part of this process, the regional and pillar bureau AAs will coordinate where appropriate.

For proposed awards at or above \$75 million, the Administrator will review the completed AARAD and provide a final authorization to proceed ("go/no-go") with the award based on the AA's recommendation and documentation of how the award satisfies the qualifying criteria. This review is in addition to and builds on the AA's pre-solicitation review and approval.

Instructions and additional information on the review process are provided in Tab 2.

#### **Attachments:**

Tab 1 - Acquisition and Assistance Review and Approval Document

Tab 2 – Instructions and Additional Information

**TAB 1**

**ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE REVIEW AND APPROVAL DOCUMENT FOR  
PRE-SOLICITATION AND PRE-AWARD**

Project Name:

Bureau/Office/Mission:

Task Order Series (if applicable):

( ) Pre-Solicitation      ( ) Pre-Award

This document authorizes the cognizant official to move forward with a solicitation or award for \_\_\_\_\_ services or supplies, based on a description of how the activity/services satisfy the criteria below.

1. **Policy Relevance:** The activity is consistent with the Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS) and U.S. policy and Agency priorities.
2. **Commitment to Sustainable Results:** The activity reflects a clear commitment to effective programs designed to deliver results that can be sustained beyond the U.S. engagement.
3. **Feasibility:** The situation on the ground is conducive to the success of the activity (if applicable).
4. **Value for Money:** The overall funding is consistent with the Agency's objectives and priorities (in-country if applicable) and the projected funding level is commensurate with the expected results to be achieved.
  - Note: In the Independent Government Cost Estimate (IGCE), the activity manager confirms that anticipated support costs are as low a percentage of total costs as possible and that local costs are as high a percentage of total costs as possible.
5. **Partner Capacity:** (Pre-Award) In the event of a final "Go/No-Go" decision, the proposed partner (without disclosure of the name of the organization) demonstrates sufficient technical capacity to perform the activity and a commitment to developing local capacity, if applicable
6. **Funding:** (Pre-Award) In the event of a final "Go/No-Go" decision, the Operating Unit must note if and when any planned funding is expiring.
7. **Internal Clearance:** The regional bureau AA has received no objection from the pillar bureau AA and vice versa, if applicable.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

[For Acquisition--Procurement Sensitive Information under FAR 3.104]

**ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE REVIEW AND APPROVAL DOCUMENT FOR PRE-SOLICITATION AND PRE-AWARD**

|   |
|---|
| Project Name:<br>Bureau/Office/Mission:<br>Task Order Series (if applicable): |
|---|

**PRE-SOLICITATION APPROVAL (AT OR ABOVE \$25 MILLION)**

Approve:

Disapprove:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible AA      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible AA      Date

Comments:

**PRE-AWARD AUTHORIZATION (AT OR ABOVE \$75 MILLION)**

Award Recommended

Award Not Recommended

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible AA      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Responsible AA      Date

Comments:

Award Authorized

Award Not Authorized

\_\_\_\_\_  
A/AID      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
A/AID      Date

Comments:

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

[For Acquisition--Procurement Sensitive Information under FAR 3.104]

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE REVIEW AND APPROVAL  
DOCUMENT FOR PRE-SOLICITATION AND PRE-AWARD**

**Pre-Solicitation Review and Approval**

At the pre-solicitation stage, the responsible Assistant Administrator (AA) will validate that all new planned awards at or above \$25 million in total estimated cost fulfill the qualifying criteria in the AARAD and approve the issuance of a solicitation. The responsible Contracting Officer's Representative/Agreement Officer's Representative (COR/AOR) will initiate the AARAD to obtain the AA's approval. A description of how the activity will satisfy each qualifying criterion must be provided in the AARAD. Specific criteria may not be relevant in every case, but the COR/AOR must address the criteria to the extent possible in the respective sections of the AARAD.

Additional supporting documentation may be attached for the AA's consideration. These may include the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), the Individual Acquisition Plan (IAP), and key elements of the Request for Proposal/Application after an initial review by the CO/AO, e.g., the statement of work/program description, evaluation criteria and independent government cost estimate.

The COR/AOR must first obtain the clearance of the Mission Director/Head of the Operating Unit and then forward the completed AARAD and supporting documentation to the responsible AA for approval. Regional bureau AAs will serve as the approving officials for award solicitations initiated in their respective bureaus in USAID/Washington or overseas missions falling under their oversight. Pillar bureau AAs will approve USAID/Washington award solicitations that the bureaus initiate. Where applicable, the regional bureau AA will obtain clearance from the pillar bureau AA. Similarly, the pillar bureau AA will obtain clearance from the regional AA when the activity will be implemented in one country or within one region.

The responsible AA will have seven calendar days from receipt of the AARAD to raise questions and provide approval. When the AARAD is approved by the responsible AA, the COR/AOR will forward the signed AARAD to the Contracting Officer/Agreement Officer (CO/AO) who will proceed with the solicitation. If the responsible AA does not respond within the seven calendar days, the COR/AOR must note on the AARAD that the seven calendar days have lapsed and forward a copy to the CO/AO who will proceed with the solicitation. The COR/AOR must maintain documentation of when the AARAD was sent to the responsible AA for approval.

The CO/AO will not issue a solicitation or otherwise make available any final requirements document without the responsible AA's signature on the AARAD or notification that the timeframe for approval has lapsed. The Procurement Action Lead Time (PALT) does not begin until the CO/AO receives the AARAD, along with other required documentation as outlined in [ADS 300, Acquisition and Assistance Planning](#).

The status of the AARAD may be discussed during the Agency A&A Plan Review, the Board for Acquisition and Assistance Reform (BAAR) or Contract Review Board (CRB) meetings.

### **Pre-Award Review and Authorization**

For awards at or above \$75 million, the Administrator will provide the final authorization to proceed ("go/no-go") with the award. The Technical Evaluation Committee (TEC) chair will complete another AARAD at the pre-award stage. A description of how the activity as proposed by the potential awardee being considered (without disclosing the name of the potential awardee) will satisfy each qualifying criterion must be provided in the AARAD. The review is in addition to and builds on the AA's pre-solicitation review and approval. The pre-solicitation AARAD must be attached. The PAD and CO/AO's responsibility determination may also be provided as attachments. The TEC chair must exclude the name of the potential awardee and any information that may identify the potential awardee from any documentation provided for the pre-award review.

While the pre-award documentation is being prepared, the TEC chair must concurrently obtain clearance from the Mission Director/Head of the Operating Unit and then forward the AARAD with supporting documentation to the responsible AA for signature. Where applicable, the responsible AA will obtain the clearance of the pillar/regional AA. The responsible AA will have seven calendar days to sign the AARAD or raise questions, after which time the document will be forwarded to the Administrator for a final authorization to proceed with the award. The Administrator will also have seven days to authorize the award or raise concerns after which time the CO/AO can proceed with the award. The TEC chair must maintain documentation of when the request was forwarded to the AA and the Administrator in order to determine that the seven days have lapsed. The AA and the Administrator will provide a written justification on the AARAD if moving forward to award is not recommended or authorized. The signed AARAD with the Administrator's authorization or a copy of the AARAD with a notation that the seven calendar days have lapsed must be provided to the CO/AO for final action on the award. The pre-award AARAD must be attached to the pre-award package when submitted to the CRB for final review before award.

The signed pre-solicitation and the pre-award AARAD must be retained in the COR/AOR and CO/AO files.